

Forest Insect & Disease Management Group, S&PF  
2500 Shreveport Highway  
Pineville, Louisiana 71360

June 15, 1976

5230 - Evaluation

Declining Shortleaf Pine - Tombigbee Ranger District

Forest Supervisor,  
National Forests in Mississippi  
Attention: Gene Sirmon

In response to your request for us to look at a shortleaf pine decline problem on the Tombigbee Ranger District, Paul Peacher met with Mr. Kearney and Mr. Pollock on June 8th at District Headquarters in Ackerman, Mississippi. Three areas were examined which had declining shortleaf trees; compartment 48 (logging unit number 1); compartment 69 - stand 23, and the area along the road to Choctaw Lake reservation area.

Many of the shortleaf pines that were examined had decline symptoms usually associated with littleleaf disease. Several of these trees were bored and there had been very little growth over the last 10 or 12 years. In addition to this growth loss, some mortality can be expected.

It is our understanding that the Ackerman unit has approximately 31,000 acres of pine type, with 25 percent of this being shortleaf. Compartment 48, which is now being logged, has 909 acres pine type of which 41 percent is shortleaf. District estimates suggest that 40 to 50 percent of these shortleaf are in some stage of decline. This compartment has a site index between 80 - 90 and is being cut back to 80 basal area.

Compartment 69 has 882 acres pine type, of which 19 percent is shortleaf. District personnel estimate that 30 percent of these shortleaf are in different stages of decline.

The area around the road to Choctaw Lake recreation area had a few scattered shortleaf declining but did not appear to be nearly as bad as the other areas that we observed.

Two alternatives you might consider are: 1) use loblolly as an alternate species in areas where this decline of shortleaf is a problem, and 2) shorten the shortleaf rotation in order to avoid stand stagnation and excessive mortality. Also, future stand entries should include salvaging affected trees.

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We hope these comments will help you in writing your management plan.  
If we can be of any further assistance, please let us know.

ROBERT C. LOOMIS

ROBERT C. LOOMIS  
Field Representative  
Forest Insect & Disease Management

cc: William Kearney, Ranger, Tombigbee Ranger District

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